



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the  
Finance Committee  
on  
**Senate Bill 656**  
February 25, 2020  
Position: **Favorable**

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of wise care of the blessings of the living environment. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a faith community of congregations in three ELCA synods, located in every part of the State.

Our community began its journey in care of creation in 1993 (“Caring for Creation,” ELCA) when we identified greenhouse gas emissions as an environmental threat.

We’ve supported expansion of renewables in Maryland’s energy portfolio since its deregulation experiment. Our intent was to advance our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the resulting environmental threat.

One consequence of dereg was pressure on older generation sources and, therefore, greater greenhouse gas emissions from those sources to meet demand growth.

Maryland subsequently addressed demand management by expansion of renewables in its portfolio. Nevertheless, current and future demand is needed to finance new and different generation sources.

Senate Bill 656 attends supply/demand calculations with a requirement that the Department of Natural Resources research greenhouse gas emissions and climate effects from generation sources, following the State’s GHG goals. That analysis can then inform Public Service Commission considerations of public utility service and capacity.

It is our position that this is essential for appropriate cost-benefit considerations, in the interest of consumers and suppliers. Including environmental effects in PSC regulatory study and action may account for the cost of generation effects now simply elided onto public functions such as disaster relief, planning, charity, and the like. We support this expansion of energy market regulation, a creature after all, of public policy and investment.

Our faith community also supports fair labor practice and living wages for workers and we support that intent of SB 656 as well.

We urge a favorable report.

Thank you for your hearing.

Lee Hudson